

# Burlington Northern - Skykomish



## **\*\*Project Update\*\***

*This newsletter, prepared by the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), contains important information about the study and cleanup of environmental contamination associated with Burlington Northern's former maintenance and fueling facility in the town of Skykomish. This project is nearing important decision points about how the contamination will be cleaned up. The cleanup will impact both individual property owners and the town. We need the community's involvement now. Please read this notice completely and contact Marianne Deppman at the Department of Ecology at (206) 649-7254, if you have any questions or comments*

### **Good News About Drinking Water**

The Washington State Department of Health found no evidence of petroleum in the Skykomish drinking water supply system during the first round of tests in late 1996. The Department of Health plans to conduct a second round of tests during the next significant flood event this year.

For the first round of tests, the Health Department collected water samples at three separate locations. Water was collected from outside taps at two homes in the area above the petroleum "plume" (where petroleum is floating on the water table, see page 3) and one sample was collected from the spigot in Burlington Northern's "water shed" on Railroad Avenue. The purpose of the testing was to determine if petroleum from the Burlington Northern Site was entering the town's drinking water supply. The samples were not analyzed for other substances such as fecal coliform.

While no evidence of petroleum was found during the tests, the Department of Health reported that the lab did detect a trace of the chemical naphthalene in the sample taken from the water shed. The amount of naphthalene detected was far below levels considered a health hazard. Because none of the other samples showed evidence of naphthalene, the Department of Health believes it is possible that the naphthalene may have come from the creosote-treated utility pole near the shed. If you have questions about the drinking water testing, please call Steve Hulsman at the Washington State Department of Health, at (206) 464-7962. We will notify you of the results of the next round of testing.

### **Preventing Exposure to Contaminants**

Besides the large area of petroleum contamination below the ground in Skykomish, there are several smaller areas on Burlington Northern's property that contain metals and PCBs above cleanup levels. (Please see the map on page 3 for the locations of these areas.) Some of the metals and PCBs in these areas are on the ground surface and therefore it is easier for people to come into direct contact with them. Regular, long-term contact with these contaminants could pose a health hazard.

To help prevent people from coming into contact with the metals and PCB contamination on its property, in the near future Burlington Northern will:

## **March 1997**

**Ecology's Site Manager is:**

Barbara Trejo  
Department of Ecology  
3190 160th Avenue S.E.  
Bellevue, WA 98008  
(206) 649-7206

**Review Documents at:**

Skykomish Library  
119 4th Avenue North  
Skykomish, WA 98288

Department of Ecology  
Northwest Regional Office  
3190 160th Avenue S.E.  
Bellevue, WA 98008  
(206) 649-7190

**More Information?**

Call Marianne Deppman,  
Ecology's Public Involvement  
Specialist at:  
(206) 649-7254 or leave a  
message at: 1-800-826-7716

*If you have special accommodation  
needs call Marianne Deppman at  
the number above or at  
(206) 649-4259 (TDD)*

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and equal opportunity employer

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- Place "no trespassing" signs near these areas
- Apply a dust suppressant to the contaminated soil

The dust suppressant will be a thin layer of an almost invisible binding material. This material will serve as a temporary cover and will prevent exposure to the contamination until a permanent solution is chosen. During the next phase of the cleanup, Ecology and Burlington Northern, with input from the Skykomish community, will evaluate permanent cleanup solutions for these areas.

The best way to prevent you or your family members from coming into contact with the metals and PCB contamination is to avoid the areas on the map on page 3 which are noted to contain metals and PCBs.

## Blood Tests for Lead

Due to concern over possible exposure to lead in the surface soils, in November 1996, the Seattle-King County Health Department screened four children in Skykomish for blood lead levels. The children were from two families considered at highest potential risk for lead exposure due to their proximity to the lead contaminated soils. The children's blood did not contain elevated levels of lead and the results of the tests are considered normal. No additional testing for blood lead is planned at this time, unless new information indicates it is necessary.

## Air Monitoring

Based on recommendations from the Washington State Department of Health and the Seattle-King County Health Department, Ecology and Burlington Northern are now discussing an indoor air monitoring program for Skykomish. The purpose of the monitoring would be to determine whether petroleum vapors are present in buildings and if vapors are present, in what concentrations. Currently, Ecology and Burlington Northern are discussing the logistical details of a monitoring plan.

Under the plan, the air would be monitored in the Skykomish School and in several residences above the petroleum "plume."

Air monitoring would begin early in 1997 and would take place quarterly for one year to account for possible seasonal changes. We will notify you when more information is available regarding the air monitoring program.

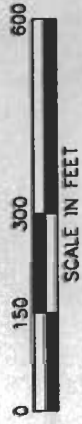
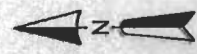
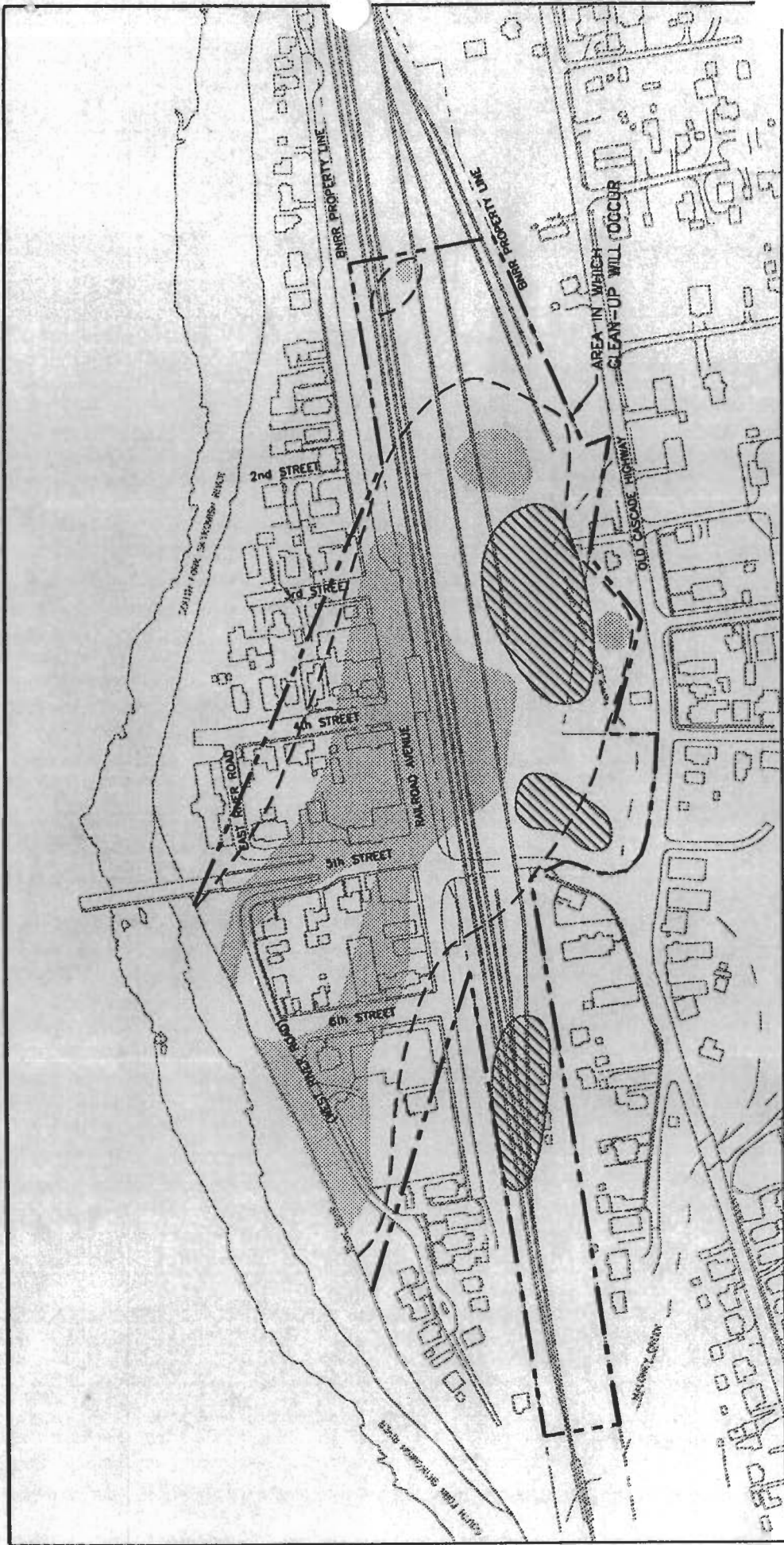
*Please note that the boundaries of the "plume" of floating petroleum are approximate and are likely to change as more data is gathered about the site. Also remember that petroleum contamination exists in the soil and ground water beyond the plume which will also require cleanup. See the map on page 3 for the entire area in which cleanup will occur.*

## Citizens Group

The Skykomish Environmental Coalition has been hard at work overseeing cleanup activities on behalf of the citizens of Skykomish. In August and September 1996, the group conducted a survey to gauge how well people understand the cleanup process and to find out what questions or concerns people have. In October, Ecology awarded the group a second grant to continue its work and to retain the services of the independent environmental consultant. The group also continues to coordinate the public meetings for the cleanup project. Contact Michael Moore, Lorna Goebel or Anne Sekor for more information.

## Overall Project Schedule

Ecology and BN are still working to complete the final report on the results of the study of contamination. We expect this report to be out to the public in early to mid-1997. Later in the year, the document detailing possible cleanup scenarios for the site will be out for public review. BN will begin some "interim" cleanup activities this summer. You will be notified and have an opportunity to give us feedback before any cleanup work begins.



**LEGEND**

- Area in which cleanup will occur
- TPH concentrations above MTCA clean-up level
- Soil metal or PCBs above clean-up level
- Areas of historic free floating petroleum occurrence

REF DWG	DESC.	DATE	APP'D	DATE
0	E.F.	2/26/97	J.H.	2/26/97
NO	DRAWN	DATE	CHKD	DATE

SCALE 1" = 300'

BNRR SKYKOMISH, WASHINGTON

3-2792-110

CAD FILE 11815145

Blair Northern Santa Fe Railway

**SITE BOUNDARY AND AREAS EXCEEDING CLEAN-UP LEVELS**